



**Testimony of Anthony DiLauro  
Executive Director, Human Services Council**

**\*H.B. No. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.**

*February 23 2017 Appropriations Subcommittee on Health Public Hearing  
Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, Regional Action Council Funding*

Dear: Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, Senator Markley, Representative Dillon and members of the Appropriations Subcommittee:

My name is Anthony DiLauro and as the Executive Director of the Human Services Council, I am very concerned about the proposed budget cuts within the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. These cuts will nearly wipe out the funding for the Mid Fairfield Substance Abuse Coalition which will leave Norwalk, Westport, Wilton and Weston with no substance abuse coordination of prevention services. These cuts will threaten the possible closure of the program.

The combined \$3 million reduction of grants for substance abuse services and decimation of the Regional Action Councils, would have a harmful effect on the communities that my organization serves, harm the prevention infrastructure that has led Connecticut to be considered among the country as an innovative and model state, which will lead to a loss in future Federal dollars to address emerging issues associated with substances, namely opiate, and underage alcohol use and addiction. I urge you to restore these harmful cuts to ensure crucial services are available to the residents of Connecticut.

The Connecticut Prevention Network =13 Regional Action Councils in 169 communities

- CPN is the only organized prevention network in the state! They facilitate regional needs assessments, evaluation and planning processes that support federal funding and produce epidemiological profiles used to inform state application. CPN actively represents the state and is a strong public policy advocate for substance abuse prevention and harm reduction.
- CPN supports all local prevention councils with training, technical & grant assistance, drug trends information, effective data collection, capacity building, program design and support.
- CPN provides youth and adult prevention materials harm reduction initiatives and mental health first aid training; education on opioid abuse, alcohol, marijuana, heroin, tobacco, e-cigarettes, suicide prevention, gambling awareness teams, merchant education, piloted medication drop box programs and biennial DEA sponsored drug take backs.

These cuts will eliminate some of these community coalitions completely.

**The State of CT Department of Revenue Services Annual Report (15-16 FY) has reported tax revenue from addictive substance/activities totaling \$836,947,796. The State should re-invest some of the tax revenue to decrease the abuse. Regional Action Councils receive approx. \$1.4 million dollars a year. If the proposed cuts occur then who will provide prevention to all 169 communities in our state?**

- **Alcoholic Beverage Tax - \$63,113,361**
- **Cigarette Tax - \$361,578,691**
- **Tobacco Products Tax - \$12,255,744**
- **Gambling - Estimate of \$400 Million**
- **Regional Action Council - Prevention entity - Approx. \$1.4 Million**

**Multiple studies indicate that every \$1 spent on substance abuse prevention results in an average of \$10 in long term saving including healthcare costs OR \$7million in long term costs to the State of CT!**

Attached you will find the impact report that CPN has on our community.

Thank you for reading my testimony, Please think carefully about the ripple effect the lack of funding to the regional action councils will have on building and sustaining prevention efforts throughout our communities. Moreover, the effects on the children in our area and throughout the state of CT.

Sincerely,



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